

BALLARAT FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB.

EXCURSION/NEWS SHEET - JUNE 1977.

President: Mr. G. Binns Ph. 323670
Vice-Pres: Mr. L. Fink 861319
Secretary: Miss H. Burgess 312210
Treasurer: Mr. S. Reynolds 327721

Meetings held in the Biology Section at the School of Mines, Lydiard St. Sth. at 8 p.m. first Friday of each month.

NEXT MEETING: 3rd June - Mr. P. Fry -
"Roaming around Europe"

MEETING 1st JULY: Mr. A. McCallum. Natural History Reference Collection. To be held at Central Library, Camp St. at 8 p.m. (No supper).

EXCURSION 5th JUNE: Fungi Study - Invermay - White Swan Area. Leave Crockers corner (Armstrong St. side) 1.30 p.m. Members, if you have one, please bring fungi books to help in identification.

MAY MEETING: An estimated 120 people attended on 6th May to hear Dr. Jim Willis, recently retired director of the National Herbarium, speak, and show films on his experiences as "A Naturalist in New Zealand." The President welcomed many visitors, and afterwards at a short business meeting had much pleasure in welcoming the following new members to the Club: Mr. & Mrs. Peter Dale, Claire and Andrew; Mrs. Sargeant, Jodi and Mark; David Willshire, Godfrey Trulove, Neville Frazer and Gregory Creek.

SHORT RESUMÉ ON DR. J. H. WILLIS' ADDRESS ON NEW ZEALAND.

After the exhilarating experience of flying over the snow capped Alps of the South Island, Dr. Willis visited the 12,349 ft. Mt. Cook, and the Tasman Glacier which is solid ice, 18 miles long, 1 mile wide and 500 ft. deep, one of the world's largest. The rainfall on the west coast is 300" a year, and many of the peaks are snow capped all the year round.

Dr. Willis noted the absence of eucalypts and acacias, these Australian natives being replaced in N.Z. by forests of beech, spruce, kauri and other pines. New Zealand has no reptiles, cone shells or marsupials, excepting Brushy Tailed Possums. Slides were shown of the Canterbury Plains area, carrying 15 sheep to the acre; the beautiful Otago district and Dunedin and Christchurch. Many of New Zealand's flowers are yellow or white. There are 64 species of daisy in the Mt. Cook area, *Celmisia coriacea* being the main one. The Shakespearean garden at Dunedin impressed Dr. Willis with its beauty; and giant *Clematis* measured 6" across. Some other floral slides were of the Mt. Cook Lily or Buttercup, snow white and very large; laburnum, callistemon, exceptionally large proteas and banksias and beautiful azaleas and rhododendrons; not forgetting the N.Z. floral emblem, the kowhai tree.

Some of the places visited in the north Island were Wellington, New Plymouth, Mt. Egmont, Rotorua, Auckland, Waipoua and North Cape. Most people have heard of the thermal region of Rotorua and Dr. Willis's slides did justice to this unusual phenomenon. We saw the kea parrots with their strong hooked beaks, the big glossy reddish brown weka bird, bald coots; the breeding grounds of the sooty albatross on Otago Peninsular, and the native Kiwi which lives in dense forests and being nocturnal is hard to see. New Zealand abounds in lush forests with many types of tree and other ferns, beautiful waterfalls, cascades, and fiords of the south island. Rangitoto Island is in the North island, is only 200 years old, has no soil, but consists of volcanic scoria and clinker. Kidney ferns, native lillies, peppers and reindeer moss abound there.

Dr. Willis's slides were superb, his commentary most interesting and the evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. Mr. Alan Sonsee moved a vote of thanks.

MAY EXCURSION: On Sunday 8th May 30 members met at the Linton Block on the Snake Valley Road for a survey of flora and fauna in the hope that this block may be maintained in its present state.

We divided into 3 groups and surveyed different areas. The block had evidence of a recent control burn as most of the eucalypts had scorched trunks, but there was no sign of epicormic growths in the older trees. They are a

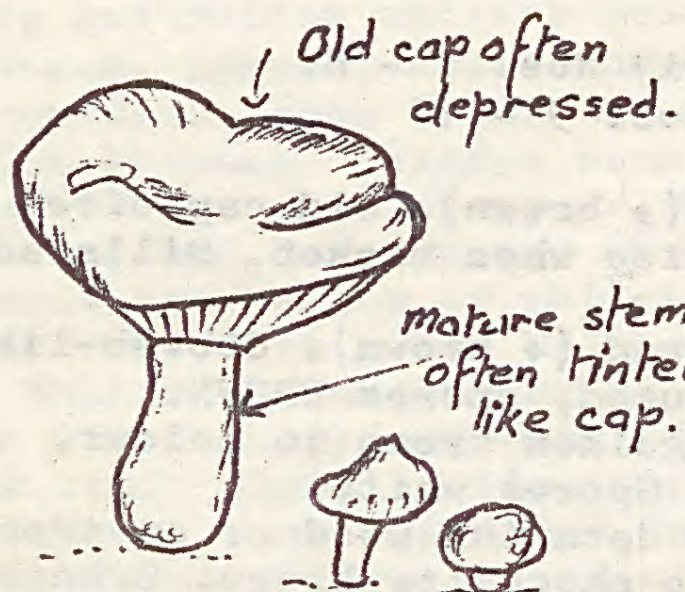
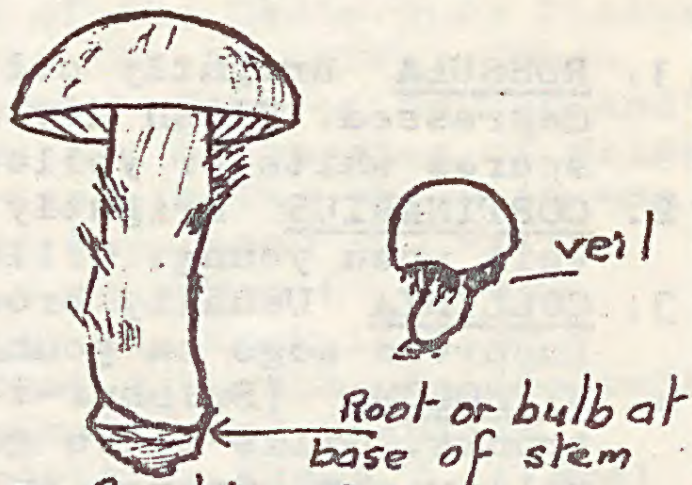
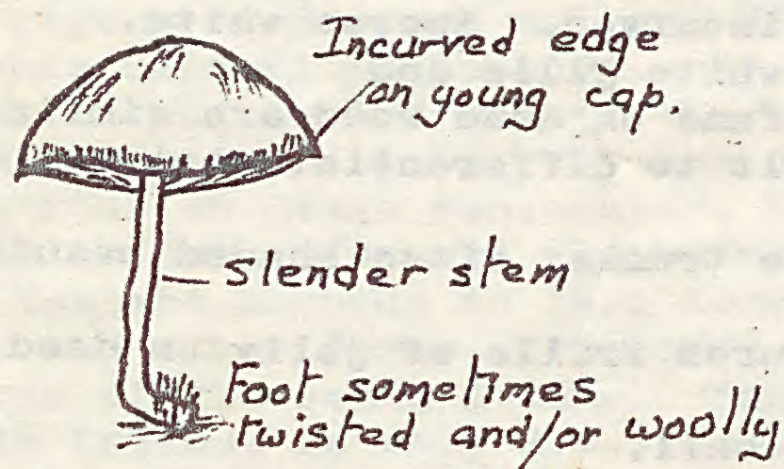
A GUIDE TO LOCAL FUNGI (not comprehensive)

FUNGI: 1. Agarics (gilled fungi) Nos. 1 - 8.
2. Non gilled fungi. Nos. 9 - 17

1. RUSSULA Brightly coloured (+ brown). Old cap often depressed. Flesh dry and crisp when broken. Gills and spores white or yellow.
2. CORTINARIUS Brightly coloured (+ brown). Cobweb-like veil when young. Gills coloured, spores BROWN.
3. COLLYBIA Usually brown or golden brown in colour. Incurved edge on young cap. Spores white.
4. HYPHOLOMA (Sulphur-top) On decaying wood or on tree trunks. Gills olive green to chocolate brown. Orange or yellow cap. Spores purple - black.
5. MARASMIUS A very tiny tough fungus which dries well. Often on rotting wood. Spores white.
6. MYCENA Delicate, translucent, putrescent. Minute plants, clear bright colours. On rotting wood, leaves etc. Margin of cap NOT incurved. Spores white.
7. PLEUROTUS Brown caps, white gills and
8. PANELLUS, tough little fans on dead wood are similar and it is often difficult to differentiate between them. Don't eat them PLEASE!
9. TRAMETES Brown (On tree trunks, often shaded beautifully) Pores beneath.
10. TREMELLA White or coloured frills of jelly on dead wood.
11. LYCOPERDON Common puff-ball.
12. SCLERODERMA Earthball. Black spore mass inside.
13. PEZIZA Smooth little caps. Brown.
14. GEOGLOSSUM Earth tongues, flattened, clublike, dark coloured.
15. RAMARIA Coral fungus. Yellow, orange, pink, purple, white.
16. FLAME FUNGUS Clavaria. Simple bright red or yellow tongues.
17. BOLETUS Bright colours. Vertical tubes with pores opening below.

F. Chuk.

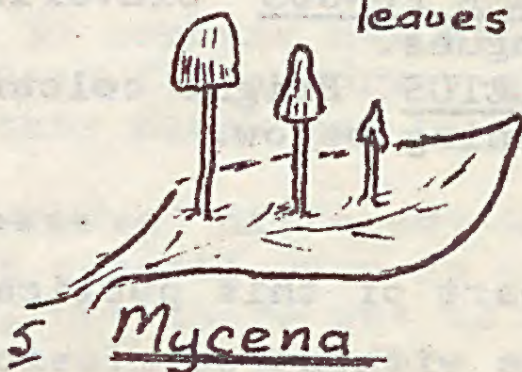
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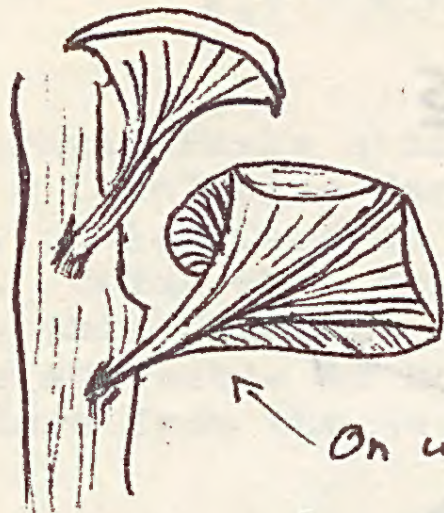
1. Russula2. Cortinarius3. Collybia

On decaying
wood or
tree trunks.

4. Hypholoma4. Marasmius

On rotting wood
leaves etc.

5. Mycena



On wood

7 Pleurotus

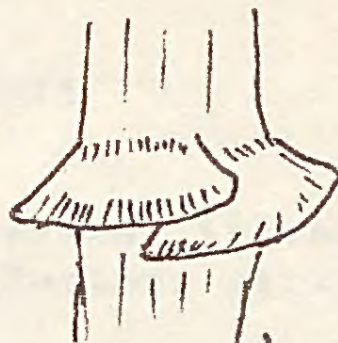


On dead wood

underside gilled

8 Panellus

On tree trunks.



pores beneath

9 Trametes

Frills of "jelly" on dead wood.



10 Tremella



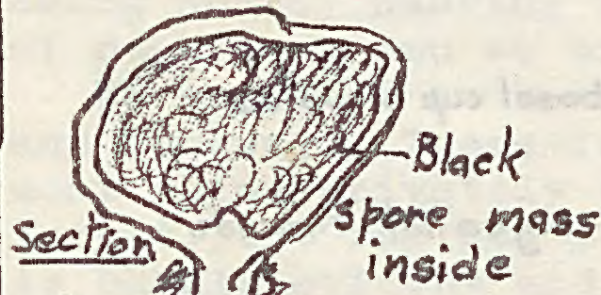
puff ball

11 Lycoperdon



(a)

12 Scleroderma



Black spore mass inside

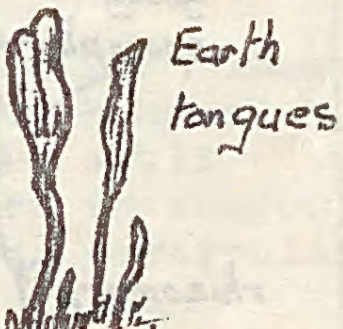
Section

12 Scleroderma

Smooth little brown cups.

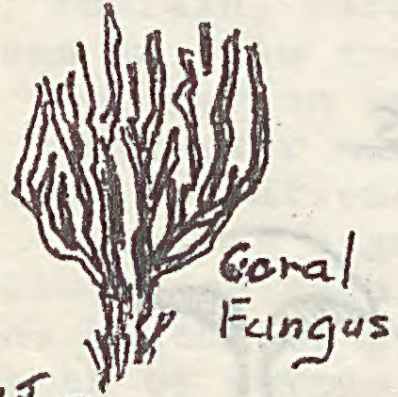


13 Peziza



Earth tongues

14 Geoglossum



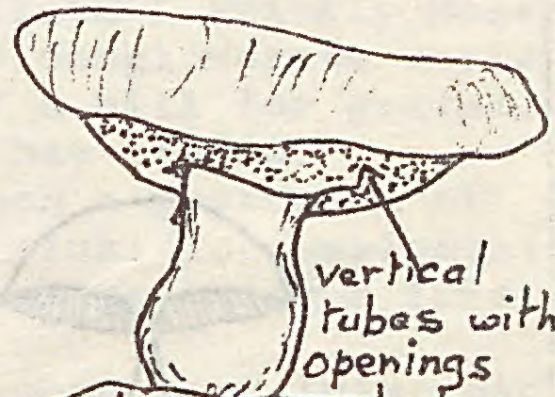
Coral Fungus

15 Ramaria



Flame Fungus

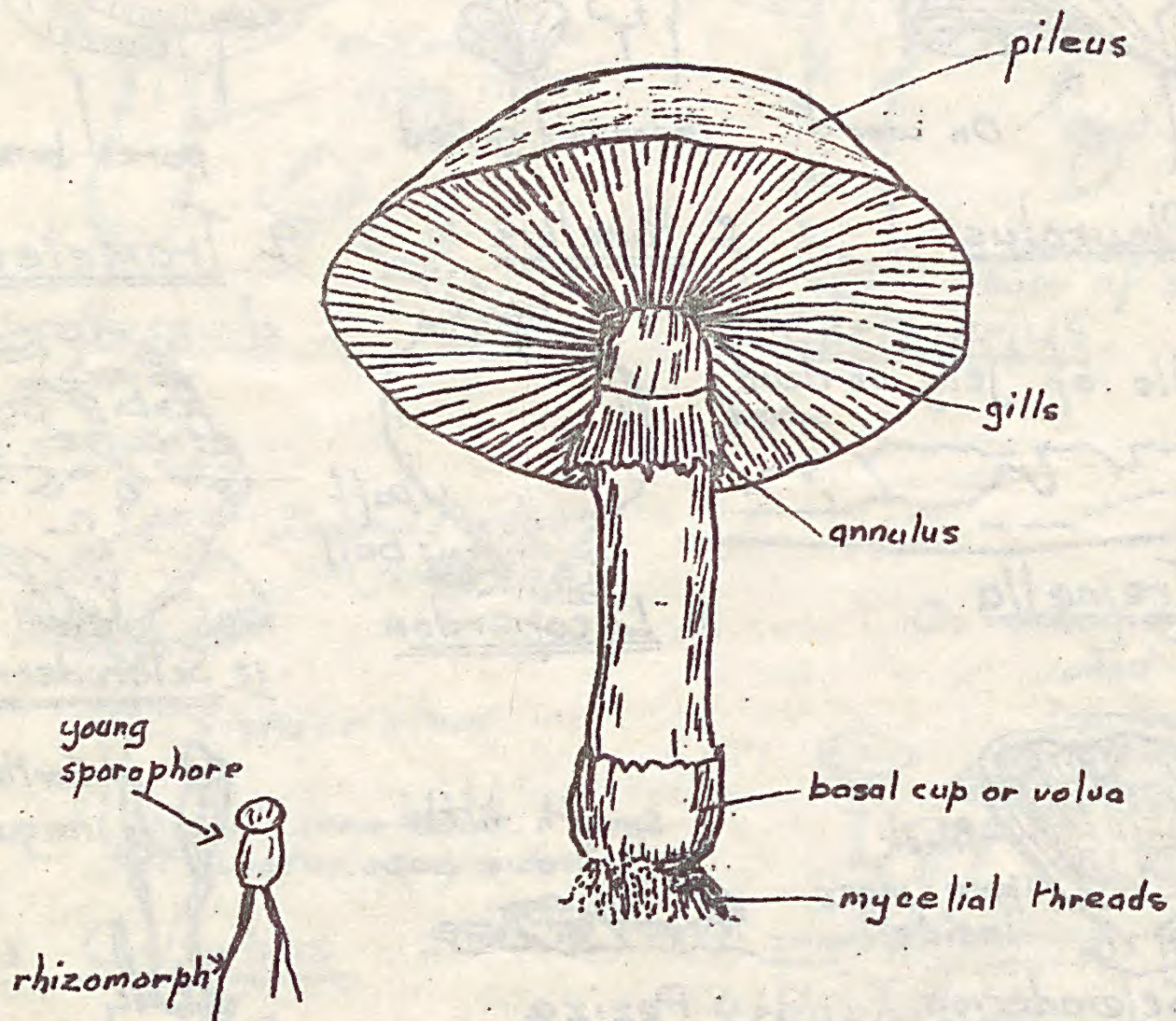
16 Clavaria



vertical tubes with openings below

17. Boletus

GILLED FUNGUS



GILL ATTACHMENTS



Adnate



Sinuate



Decurrent

S.B.

W.V.F.N.C.A. CAMP-OUT - OTWAY RANGES.
AUGUST 27 - 28.

Caravan Parks available at Colac:

1. Lake Colac Caravan Park. Phone 052-315971
2. Colac Caravan Park. Phone 052-315337
3. Colac Show Grounds. Phone 052-313586

As this Camp-Out occurs in school holiday period, it would be advisable to book accommodation early. Further particulars from the Secretary or the President.

MACEDON RANGES: On Sunday 15th May a friend and I joined Bendigo F.N.C. on their excursion to the Macedon Range. Mr. Graham Douglas, President of the Macedon Range Conservation Society showed us points of interest off the main roads.

We saw an area which has been excavated and bones of kangaroos studied. It is uncertain as to the reason why there were so many bones, mostly broken, but one theory is that it was the site of an aboriginal community.

A stop was made at Brocks Monument, a volcanic extrusion of Solversbergite, a hard rock, not the result of an eruption. It is unique, in that it is only one of three areas in Victoria with the same rock - the other two being nearby Hanging Rock and Camel's Hump. The same type of rock is known to exist in Germany.

We explored some of the water catchment area for Romsey and Sunbury. There is little Crown Land in the Ranges, most being privately owned. At present most is still forest, but for how long? Evidence of the fire in the 60's is barely evident and the regrowth is prolific, particularly the bracken which is over 5 ft. high in parts. The Eucalypts most common are Eucalyptus obliqua - Messmate and E. radiata, narrow-leaved peppermint. The only wattles seen in this area were Acacia verticillata - Prickly Moses.

Further on we saw an area of Kerrie conglomerate where a contractor had bulldozed the side of a hill for gravel. Since operations have ceased the hill has eroded.

This was a good area for heath - such a profusion of flowers on each stem in all shades of pink. To complement the heath the fungi was also colourful, including a fine patch of purple.

A good day, and I would like to commend more inter club excursions.

Contributed - Helen Burgess.

particularly fine stand of trees, mostly red stringy barks. Eucalyptus macrorhyncha with some broad leafed peppermints, E. dives and other species of eucalypt scattered in the forest. The trees are tall with straight trunks and a light canopy, giving filtered sunlight to the forest floor. There was little flora of any height, due, no doubt, to the recent fire. Apart from over 30 species of plants and some fungi, lichens, mosses, most profuse being the golden bush pea - Pultenaea gunnii, a couple of black-tailed wallabies were seen, 16 species of birds; were seen and included the Eastern Shrike Tits and Sittellas.

Two young members were fortunate in observing a tree from which the bark had quite recently been rubbed off by a deer. In other areas deer droppings were seen.

It was a good day, although overcast. A visit in the Spring could reveal many more species of flora and fauna.

BIRD NOTES - AT HOME & 'ABROAD'

At home, at Mt. Helen, the Crimson Rosella are punishing the Cotoneaster berries.

On April 10th a Wedge Tailed Eagle, which had been circling north of Green Hill flew rapidly over the garden. On May 1st a party of Yellow Tail Black Cockatoos flew West, about 400 metres from home. Another group was seen in a wayside tree, a few miles south of Enfield on May 7th.

Lerderderg Gorge on April 12th - very many Honeyeaters of some 5 species.

Two Brolgas between Cressy and Beeac on April 23rd, and again on May 7th by a patch of open water, only a short distance from the road.

As a lover of rainforest birds, it was very pleasant to see King Parrots at Marengo and Paradise near Apollo Bay on April 30th and May 7th. Paradise was alive with birds on my four visits during the month.

F. E. G. Harrap.

GOULD LEAGUE BIRD POSTERS will be available for purchase, in four varieties, at the next meeting, 3rd June. Price - 75 cents each.
